

Council on Aging
December 3, 2012
Minutes

Members present: M. Cahalane, E. Hamann, S. Hammerlind, A. Morgan, A. Mullin, J. Semuels, T. Olsen, C. Qiang-Lai, M. Scali

Meeting was called to order at 7:37p.m.

There were no senior citizen concerns brought to the meeting.

The Minutes from the November meeting were reviewed and accepted with corrections.

General Announcements:

The COA Board thanked Joel for serving as Chair. The new slate of officers, including Penny Schafer as the new Chair, takes office in January.

Director's Report

- A part-time social worker is being considered for the Board of Health. Nava is asking for an additional 20 hours of social work for the COA for the summer months.
- Rita Shah worked closely with Community Health Network Alliance. Belmont COA is now part of that organization enabling possible collaboration and funding from that group.
- The Belderbus was returned by the Belmont Highway Department. They cannot use it so it was recommended that the COA donate it to the Commonwealth in return for a commitment from the Commonwealth to provide future parts that may be needed to repair our existing vehicles.
- The Holiday Crafts Fair netted \$4600, more than \$600 over 2011's Crafts Fair. The Friends, who sponsored the event, will be reporting the final numbers following completion of the Raffle.
- Budget – The COA budget review by the Belmont Warrant Committee has, in past years, been scheduled for January. This year the budget review is being completed in stages with Salaries the current focus. As before, the entire review of the COA budget is schedule for January.
- The COA's new part-time administrator (15 hours/week) is George Durante. This is a Town Position. Mr. Durante started recently.
- Springwell – Stacey H. has been nominated to represent the Belmont COA on the Springwell Board under the authority of Chapter 19A, S.4.

Transportation Working Group

Sub-members: Penny S., Nava, Joel, Alan, Tomi.

The group's survey was presented along with the draft report with recommendations. There was much discussion including;

- an observation that Winchester's approach cannot be compared to Belmont's given Winchester's reliance on volunteer drivers and the concern for liability.
- administrative difficulties implementing the direct taxi program in 2002
- uninsured volunteers

- offering \$2 taxi vouchers as used by other Towns with the Town of Belmont paying the differential
- Newton's highly differential costs for a handicapped ride at \$30 versus a regular senior ride at \$13
- the need to explore a more reliable "cost/ride" as the data the group received from the survey did not adequately reflect that information
- the \$139,000 of the COA's \$380,000 budget is a very small price to pay to support the physical, social, and medical well-being of Belmont Seniors.
- additionally, the lack of expense associated with planning and executing the numerous programs and programming of the Center because of the active involvement of Belmont Seniors in this process is minor when compared to other communities programming costs.
- The Board unanimously supports the current transportation policy.
- The discussion was unanimously tabled with a motion from Alan M. with the sub-group agreeing to reconvene and come back with a revised report including its recommendations.

Chao Qiang-Lai is a new member on the Friends Board.

Elections:

The COA Board elected its 2013 Officers to take office in January:

Chair	Penny Schafer
Vice Chair	MaryAnn Scali
Treasurer	Michael Cahalane
Secretary	Angela S. Mullin

Motion to accept the new officers was unanimously accepted.

Establishment of sub-group to attend Warrant Committee meetings;

There was a question regarding when the sub-group covering the COA meets. Members who will take turns attending these meeting include: Joel, (who committed to 12/5, 12/12 and 12/19), MaryAnn (who will attend 12/26 if there is a meeting), Mike, Penny, Tomi, and Nava. Further volunteers for these meetings will be established in January. The Budget Narrative is due during the week of January 11th.

Strategies to bring more of the senior community to use the Beech Street Center:

Nava suggested that an Outreach Campaign might be useful, putting together facts and figures regarding programs available and usage. She suggested a Grassroots campaign to bring in younger seniors, perhaps a "Series", along with using the traditional methods of Senior Notes, Wicked Local, Belmont Citizen, and the Patch.

Presently, we have 60 members using the Fitness Center.

COA Closing Policy

Nava reported that the current communication of the Center's closing is done through the website, the Town's main switchboard, and the Belmont Police's Emergency messages. The COA Board recommended and approved the following policy during such emergency situations:

“The Board supports call forwarding from the Front Desk to the Director’s home phone during emergencies affecting the status of the Senior Center and senior programs. When the Belmont Schools are closed, the Senior Center will remain open although all programs will be closed.” It is recommended that this policy be published in the Senior Notes.

The Board was reminded that all are invited to the Christmas luncheon on Tuesday, December 18th at noon.

Next COA meeting is scheduled for January 7, 2013 at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tomi Olson